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I support the no action alternative in the Iditarod National Historic Trail Environmental Assessment.

The FS did not adequately consider an alternative of a completely non motorized trail. All other considered alternatives fail to resolve the well-known and on-going conflict between skiers and snowmachiners. The current CLMP already has an overwhelming bias favoring motorized recreation. The implementation of any alternative except the no action alternative will result in more trail miles becoming de facto snowmachine trail miles because of the well known incompatibility between snowmachiners and skiers. Displacement of the skiers occurs when the two mix. The few mitigation measures proposed in the EA will not work to prevent this phenomenon.

Snowmachining as currently practiced in the Chugach back country does not meet the standards of ANILCA as a traditional activity practiced by rural people engaged in a subsistence way of life. It has become a modern, expensive, almost violent activity engaged in by urban/suburban people who dominate public lands as a recreation. The FS has generally failed to protect the National Forests from the resource degradation resulting from the use of these machines. It has duty to protect and authority to regulate.

Considering that the FS responds to no real need when it proposes opening the Iditarod Trail, only the no action alternative satisfies existing land management regulations and responds to real needs.

Rick Smeriglio

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